



The Cultural Landscape Affection: Life Intimacy

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Introduction

Culture plays an important role in our lives and shapes our experience. The role of culture in influencing landscape experience is obvious.

The physical landscape, wherever it has been so changed by people as to make that change visually apparent is a direct cultural expression; even as a various arts and sciences culture focuses in many ways, on the qualitative aspects of the interaction between people and people, people and nature, and people and landscape the latter a product of interaction between people and nature (Stillman, 1976).

Culture embodies the inspirations and aspirations of local, regional, and national communities, and the direct, more or less refined and stylized expression of their philosophical attitudes towards landscape-environmental qualities.

These influences permeate every aspect of an individual life influencing both thoughts and behavior, thus determining how one looks at the world (Tuan, 1974). Kaplan et al. (1985) agree that the understanding of the environmental setting elicits emotional growth, which in turn symbiotically influences the behavior of others. As an example, looking into the perspectives of the Malay, Chinese and Indian communities, culture is manifested in landscape through religion and belief, values and norms and custom and behavior. As for the Malays who are practicing Islam, they believe that the landscape is the manifestation of the goodness; strengthening man's devotion to the creator. This understanding forms the landscape of the rural residential area as a humble and peaceful setting with verdant

forest and vegetation; which is shared by the whole community.

Cultural Landscape

Landscape evolution has started during the Romanticism Movement. This movement is fundamentally the awakening point in environmental consciousness. It was developed during the eighteenth century through the nineteenth century where at that time, researchers have established provision of new scientific ideas that made possible a new perspective in rational comprehension, as opposed to the spontaneous enjoyment of the landscape. From this moment, people start to recognize that there was a variety of landscape characters that determined its categories. One of it is known as cultural landscape.

Cultural landscape in Malaysia is predominantly landscapes of the rice fields, coconut groves and rubber plantation. Nowadays, oil palm plantation has become an added scenery to the cultural landscape of the country since the early 1970's. Rice cultivated landscape is found in the northwestern region of the peninsular as well as along the foothills of the coastal areas in the east coast. Rubber and palm oil cultivated areas are mostly found along the interior, located at the foothills scattered along the length and breath of the Malay Peninsular. The natural landscape is predominantly forest covered and coastal areas.

Cultural Landscape Enhancement of Kong Kong Fishing Village

This paper looks into the meaning of cultural landscape and its responsiveness

in a Chinese village named Kong Kong Fishing village by Siti Syahirah Sujak. She studied and proposed the best cultural landscape planning and design that is not only highlighting the local taste and values, but also injecting potential to increase local community income while preserving their cultural and natural landscape values. Siti Syahirah with her approach of Eden illumination intends to change the image of Kong Kong Fishing Village. Kong Kong Fishing village is located near Johor River; a major river in Johor State of Malaysia. Issues that have to resolved in this rural planning and design project include: the villagers who are currently getting low income, the existing natural resources that are not fully utilized as social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits and less appreciation towards the existing cultural and natural landscape.

Siti Syahirah incorporated a sensitive approach for her site inventory process. The Potential Surface Analysis (PSA) method is used for her analysis procedure. She came out with Self-illuminous as her design concept

that look at the potential of Kong Kong village as an important cultural tourism site, utilizing the existing natural and cultural richness. This village that is now overshadowed by the surrounding rapid development will be seen as the catalyst for natural and cultural landscape tourism.

Conclusion

Preservation and conservation of cultural landscape is a process that helps to promote local culture and at the same time helps to elevate local, regional and national income through economic endeavors. Malaysia with her fast pace modern development should value cultural and natural richness, and be proud of her traditional values. To become a developed nation, it is not impossible to preserve our cultural values along as presented by Siti Syahirah in Kong Kong Fishing village.



Figure 2: Kong Kong village detail area masterplan

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